



Coast Guard Flag Voice 25

WORKFORCE RESTORATION

Not coming as a surprise to anyone, the Coast Guard continues to experience a shortfall of people. We recognize many Coast Guard members, active duty, reserve, civilian and Auxiliary, are working very hard to get the job done despite the workforce shortage. This Flag Voice complements ALDIST 005/99; consult it for greater detail on each of these initiatives.

We got behind the recruiting "power curve" beginning in 1994 as we streamlined, and have not caught up since due to the annual raising of the bar (billets added due to budgetary action) and the external recruiting environment becoming increasingly challenging. The economy is doing well, today's youth decreasingly see the military service as a potential career option, and DoD, one of our largest competitors for this youth market, is rolling out unprecedented recruiting efforts with massive resources.

In response to our Service's needs for the right people, we are implementing an extremely challenging 2-year plan to reduce personnel shortfalls during FY 1999 with the goal of bringing our workforce to full strength by the end of FY 2000. Under this plan, we are continuing the FY 1998 workforce initiatives with some minor adjustments and, most importantly, increasing the number of Coast Guard recruiters. In the last few years the 30% decrease in both recruiters and recruiting offices and reduced advertising money severely hampered our efforts to "fill the workforce." We just haven't been in enough of the right places with Coast Guard recruiters to "close the deal." In today's market, it takes more than 100 leads (those who at least inquire about the Coast Guard) to finally result in just one recruit!

We're working just as hard on the retention side as well!

Initial results for FY99 are encouraging. Key plan points:

We are continuing a wide array of successful recruiting and retention initiatives begun in FY98. For the first time since FY 1992, we recruited more people last FY than we lost (4,036 vs. 3,618).

We selected 125 additional recruiters from about 500 applications for the new billets. Some will be assigned to existing recruiting offices and most to 36 new ones. Approximately half the new recruiters will report in March 99; the remainder will be in place by the end of the transfer season. Of the new recruiters 90 percent would have been tour-complete in FY 1999, so adding them minimizes the impact on field units.

We are earnestly recruiting towards Workforce 2015. In this regard, we're investigating strategies from the other services and organizations which we can use to achieve greater success. We're establishing

new offices and plusing up others where experience shows we can be more successful, as well as increasing minority representation in our recruiting force.

The "Everybody Is a Recruiter" program (ALCOAST 095/98) is under way. To date, 21 Commandant's Letters of Commendation have been presented, and no Achievement Medals. The result is 21 recruits shipped to Cape May, more than equaling a recruiter's work for a year.

Specifics:

Officer workforce. Officer candidate and direct commission accessions are scheduled to maximum capacity, and we're recalling officers from the reserve and retirement where practicable and using Lieutenant continuation to retain high-performing officers.

Civilian workforce. We're continuing the Office of Personnel Management contract and anticipate filling the civilian workforce by the fall of 1999. Efforts are under way to process job applications more efficiently.

Enlisted workforce.

Retention initiatives. We're continuing the High Year Tenure (HYT) suspension and expanding it to all ratings. Both the number of ratings eligible and multiples for Selected Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) have increased. The Centralized First Term Reenlistment Review (CFTRR) non-rate affiliation requirement remains suspended through FY00.

Recruiting initiatives. We're offering two- and three-year enlistments and extended active duty (EAD) to CG enlisted reservists, easing the open rate list (ORL) and reenlistment restrictions for former CG and non-CG E4s-E6s for rates not on the ORL, continuing guaranteed training, expanding the geographic preference program for new recruits, modifying recruiting waiver policies where appropriate (e.g. ritalin use), offering advanced pay grade enlistment programs, directly enlisting certain specialty skills as petty officers, and providing enlistment bonuses or the College Fund to fill critical ratings.

Reserve workforce. We're offering SELRES re-enlistment, affiliation and prior service enlistment bonuses; relaxing recruit to vacant RPAL billet requirements, targeting RELAD recruiting through pre-separation briefings and by contacting members after separation, and continuing the 10 "mobile" recruiters equipped to operate "in the field" where high numbers of vacant RPAL billets exist. Please note too many members still leave active duty without fully appreciating the benefits of reserve membership; it is critically important for unit commanding officers and officers in charge to adequately counsel our reserve-eligible members on the benefits of Coast Guard Reserve affiliation. Each command should have received a "RELAD Tool Kit," see ALDIST 025/99; POC is LT(jg) Tom Farrell (202) 267-0625, tfarrell@uscg.mil.

We have revised our incentive program to promote recruiting. The new program includes several

rewards, such as awarding the Commandant's Letter of Commendation for assistance to recruiting and 72-hour liberty when a referred recruit graduates from recruit training. We continue to need every member to help the recruiting effort. The information in the ALDIST constitutes a valuable "tool box" to assist Team Coast Guard members in their recruiting efforts. The CG Recruiting Command has developed a field guide for those interested in assisting recruiting when not on duty. To obtain copies, contact YN1 McCracken at 703-235-4755.

We will not be successful without the "multiplier" effect of our entire workforce. With your help we can alleviate our shortages faster and hire the people you would want to work with. Obtain additional information on recruiting initiatives from your local recruiting office or by calling 1-800-GET-USCG, which will connect you to your nearest recruiting office. Direct general policy questions on these initiatives to COMDT (G-WPM-1), POC LCDR Roger Mason at 202-267-1611. We continue to seek reductions in non-rate billets as a means to reduce requirements. As indicated in a previous Flag Voice, we need to be especially mindful of using our bright new junior enlisted members in non-CG mission jobs. For instance, shore support areas more appropriate for contractors or civilian employees. Thanks for your continued support!

Regards, FL Ames

[Flag Voice Contents](#)

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